

Meat Speak Beef Shank Redemption – Venoy Rogers

B: And welcome back to another episode of Meat Speak, powered by the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand. I'm Bryan Schaaf with me as always Chef Tony Biggs.

T: Bryan Good morning. We've got a lovely guest with us this morning and I will let you do the honors of an introduction.

B: You save we have a guest, but truly you are probably on the podcast as much as anybody, even maybe myself. You are certainly much more enjoyed and appreciated than I, I am just the conduit. Joining us in studio is our good friend, our numero uno meat scientist Diana Clark.

D: Thank you it's good to be here or should I say Shank you.

T: Shank you very much.

B: On that note I have a real affinity for the topic we are going to discuss today and a thing comes to mind and it is the phrase Get busy living or get busy dying. Chef Tony what do you think of that?

T: What is our topic today? Have you been to Mansfield Ohio? Diana have you been to Mansfield OH? Have you really? Have you seen the epic movie called Shaw Shank Redemption?

D: That is fantastic.

B: It just makes you feel good all over doesn't it?

T: Can't you just smell what the Biggs is cooking? Can't you tell that Bryan Schaaf when we were at conference last week and boy I had a great time with him. And all of a sudden he came out of the closet with a black tshirt on that said "beef shank redemption".

Diana: Yes

B: Game on, beef shanks, is we're not talking about Shaw Shanks we are talking about beef shanks today. Something that has been on the periphery at least of the beef version. When we look at shanks right you think of veal, you think lamb, you don't really think of cows but anatomically they are all pretty similar.

D: Yeah they still are muscle with a lot of collagen. You think about the shank you are at the foot or the hoof of the animal. It will have a lot of collagen in there to make that muscle work or to make those hooves move.

B: As we talk about beef shanks, we always get this question hey what's new out there? It's not like the animal is growing a new parts. I mean evolution is a thing I suppose. Every once in a while you see an extra rib that shows up. But not consistently but the beef shank hasn't always been used for a whole lot and we are starting to see some rumblings, some real world restaurant type examples of chefs using beef shank. Um can you tell us a little bit about first from a science perspective when we talk about beef shanks, right, it's the leg.

D: Kind of, so it's a little bit further down on the leg so if you think about a round, that's going to be more of the quadriceps your hamstring or the upper leg and then you start to think about your calf and your shin. That's the area of the shank but the shanks can be even further down like closer towards your ankle. And I am touching my leg right now and realizing no one can actually see me doing that so it is probably not helpful. So if you are sitting there imagining, maybe you could just look down at your own legs and see those differences, so that would be the hind shank and then on the other end of the animal you have the foreshank, which would be kind of closer up towards your wrists, would be where that foreshank would sit.

B: Typically this is a pretty tough cut of meat right?

D: Oh yeah, if you were to just take that and cut it and try to grill it, it's going to be tough. Like I said before, all that collagen that is in there, that collagen needs that that low and slow heat to break down and gelatinize and become that gooey goodness that we all love.

B: Interesting, interesting. You know chef your experience playing with the shank, what kind of love do you give that thing? Because I've had your shank before, it's phenomenal. What are some of the things you do to take this thing that fairly tough.

T: Oh Bryan thank you, shank you. (Laughter) You know as Diana said this is a very tough cut of meat. And like we said at annual conference, braising is a lost art. But this particular cut needs a lot of love, a lot of spices. Of course my friend chef Hugh McGivern from Scotland says you gotta pour on the parsley Biggs, ok. Your picture didn't have enough chopped parsley on the shank. He's a critic, he always says something about my food. Anyway. But you know what we do with food here. We make it fun and so what we do is we put a pizza dough around that shank after its been braising for 11 hours. And of course Austin Powers would say. "Beef Hot Pocket" right, beef hot pocket. Wow. You can serve that for 10 or 15 guests in the middle of the table with a beautiful pizza dough crust. And you have a dish that is just gonna wow everybody.

D: And you think about the shank I mean that is something that would usually be thrown into grinds, so price point on that, but then you have that beautiful shank sticking out, in the middle of the tibia, the bone up and everything, it is just a gorgeous presentation.

B: Yeah so let's talk a little more meat science, when we talk about the shank. right, cows have four legs last time I checked unless, you know...a farming accident. When we talk about the shanks that we see pouring into some restaurants. We actually are going to chat with our good friend Venoy Rogers, coming up here in a little bit. Venoy is basically sourcing a whole shank, serving it tableside Osso buco. Um that's not just ah shank. Which shank is that? I,m not talking left or right, maybe you can tell. I don't know.

D: Actually you can tell now that I think about that. But um, but usually hind shank is what is gonna be utilized. The foreshank is broken down and put into grinding materials. Can only be used in a certain percentage in terms of gr. Chuck. But the foreshank they really don't save that to be sold whole but the hind shank is what they usually go to. That's the better one because it has more meat on it. So even if you are taking it like we have done at the culinary center and split it down the middle you get more meat on both sides vs if you use that foreshank it is kind of hard to get an even amount of meat on both sides. We have done it, it is possible but stick to the hind shank it is better.

T: You know Diana when you split that at the culinary center you know you have the marrow bone right. I just feel like putting tecquila in at the end of it and lime and salt and just slurping that, it's just amazing. And then eat the beef.

D: Oh the beef is fantastic with it.

B: Yeah ok talk about that a little to give people a more visual representation of what that is. Of course you take the shank bone, you rip it down a band saw, split it lengthwise to open up that marrow cavity.

D: Yes I have actually seen this once done at Macgregors Meat with a hand saw, I was very impressed with the chefs that did this. It took 4 of them one of them was sawing and 3 of them were holding it down. They won the competition purely because of that, I thought it was incredible. Um but yeah you just take it and you split it right down the center. You try to make sure you have a good amount of meat on both sides. But majority of cut shops have the ability to do this without ease. Or I should say with ease.

T: How much does that shank weigh? How much does a beef shank weigh give or take?

D: I'd say 6 –8 lbs.

T: So can you imagine 4 butchers that weigh over 300 lbs, with a hacksaw, splitting that thing down the middle? That's 2, 4, 6 that's 800 lbs. of men cutting that down the center. They deserve an award.

D: It was pretty awesome, and I have to say actually 2 of them were females.

B: Impressive. I feel like that's like the modern day punch line to "how many people does it take to change a light bulb." Well it kind of depends right.

D: Laughter...how many people does it take to saw a beef shank in half?

B: You know as we look at certain cuts that are out there and chef I will throw this to you first because you have been all over the world you have cooked in all different cultures and cuisines. Your experience dealing with different things like lamb shank, veal shank, compared to the much, much larger beef shank. I guess are there some real differences that you see outside of just the species specific. Do they perform the same?

T; Well you know braising is the name of the game here. Even when you go to Jordan and there national dish is called mansif and that is a braised lamb and yogurt. It's braising ok. They use a dried yogurt called jameed. It looks like a little baseball or a softball and it has been dried in the sun. So they take that jameed and they break it down into a liquid ok with spices cardamom, ginger and olives. And that's how they braise the lamb. So when the lamb has actually been braised, same as the shank but you know Americans love it more in red wine and brown sauce and those types of herbs, this is the Jordanian way and they take that lamb that is just falling off the bone, beautiful, put it on an Arabic rice full of almonds, and shrek bread and culturally they eat it with their hands. Which is just such a family type of thing. That's the Sunday dinner with all the butlers from the king's palace and we were eating with our hands and it is just magical. So that is just one way to do it. With a lot of spices but the same process and the same type of cooking method.

D: Do you notice when you braise with different stuff does it bring out different flavors in the beef.

T: Oh absolutely I mean jameed is very strong dried yogurt flavor so you are gonna get that yogurt flavor and if you are not used to that pungent taste you are gonna be I'm not sure I like that but once you get used to it you just, its one of those things you just can't stop eating.

D: That's awesome

B: Interesting when Diana, not a lot of people know that but before coming to work with beef as you do now. You actually came from a veal plant.

D: Yes I did.

B: Long ago early early in my days sort of in my transformative meat head years a good friend of mine who just really enjoyed experimenting, playing with things. He got on the conversation of bacon. Well why isn't there such a thing as bacon from cows? And of course now we fast forward 10 years later, yeah it's a thing and I posed it to some of our meat scientists or meat science PhDs who were here back then and they said well you know cows and pigs although different anatomically are very similar. they all have the same parts. Maybe some are a little bigger or shaped different the shanks though when you talk about the variations on your experience coming here from a veal plant before coming to work with beef. Are they similar in terms of does that foreshank still basically go into grounds or is that used differently in different species?

D: The foreshank is probably going to be used differently in different species. The foreshank of veal can still be used since there is a high demand for that veal shank. They would still utilize that for those applications because a lot of times when you see it it is more of your cross cut shank where they take it and cut it down the band saw about and 1 1/2" thick and then they can sell those to different markets. You see a lot of even just ground veal being very popular as well. So depending on the species yeah we will break things down just slightly differently. Even looking at beef vs veal the exact same animal but since veal is so much smaller you can basically break it down similar to a lamb and you will have a whole rib section or a whole hind section. You want to cut things a little bit thicker so you have more meat on the plate so to speak.

B: I'll tell you were are going to take a break here. We're going to switch gears. We are going to chat with our good friend Venoy Rogers from B Resort American Kitchen in Orlando FL and then we will be back here with Chef Tony and Diana Clark here on Meat Speak powered by the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand.

B: Joining me here on the Meat Speak podcast is Chef Vanoy Rogers from American Kitchen in Orlando FL. Chef how are you doing?

V: I'm doing good Bryan it is good to hear from you.

B: It's so good to talk to you. You know when we were discussing laying out an entire episode around the beef shank you know it is one of those cuts you see showing up on menus not necessarily from a beef animal. You see a lot of pork shanks or veal shanks but you are the first one that kind of jumped to my mind as somebody who uses this. Talk to me about do you remember how you came to the idea of you know what of beef shank by comparison is quite large. Where did you even get the idea to implement that on your menu?

V: You know what I think it was my first trip down for the chef tour. And we got that meat lab and we got around it. I had seen it before, but to get my hands on it and touch and feel it and I'm sorry. just seeing it in Omaha and it kind of just sparked something for me so what I did was, I had my first post in Florida so to speak. I had two hotels. One which was the main one a large one and a little tiny 100 room kind of tiny boutique with a more café type restaurant in it. One of the things I was tasked with was kind of balancing out that food cost and everything. So I have to say the value and the size of that piece of meat thinking of those 2 things together when they popped up in the same thought it was the bell went off. So that was when I first used it. Tried it myself first. I had had some beef shank in some dishes prior to that but I got my hand on it and tried it myself. I think the first time I used was in the eggroll which I kind of repeat and have done something similar here. Currently using it on the regular menu on 3 dishes. I have it in a bolognese, we took it in an eggroll again, and then now it's made its way kind of front and center as the star of the show for our magical dining menu as a special option for our barbacoa tacos.

B: Excellent, so I don't want to get ahead of myself but when you talk about those tacos those are if memory serves me right that is presented bone in on the table.

V: You are 100% right, it's a little bit more instead of just using it cause it is good beef its good quality meat, tons of flavor in there. So instead of just using it like a backup dancer or something kind of like covered in processed stuff. We are loud and proud with it. You know, clean that bone up a little bit, French it down. We are still able to take the part we French off that goes into our bolognese sauce, that goes into our eggroll, so we are not missing anything there. We just bring it down to more manageable dinner size portions. It's still a shareable option but if definitely can summarize and get you some wows in this whole trend of big meat and tomahawks and bones and stuff like that.

B: Can you talk about as you get it in your back door do you have to do a lot of knife work to that or I guess as you look at a practical standpoint. What do you guys have to do to basically get that thing from out of the box onto a plate you know in front of diners?

V: Well so for me it's not much. Obviously I'm professional and I don't think even for your average home cook it would be much because you know there is nothing hidden. We get after it to get some of that silver skin and whatever visible or top sinew that we can get to and we kind of clean it up to where, you know where all that stuff it pretty much gone just to break it down. As I have gotten into these more over time and I start to you know teach I went from some of my sous to my line cooks some of that stuff doesn't even need to go. It is super thin and it will actually cook out. It is just a matter of the look. We get it pretty clean on the outside mainly due to the way we serve it. For the tacos it is just right there on the table and we serve it with a little pair of tongs and it is meant to be pulled off. So we don't want too much resistance or we don't want to make any kind of toughness or trouble for the diner. But what we use for the Bolognese and in the eggrolls that stuff gets kind of broken down like you would with the pulled pork after its braised off after its cooked we kind of go at it and that would actually limit some of the initial knife work. If you are going to break it down and turn it into a meat sauce or a stuffing of some sort. You know it is very minimal what you see out there. There is kind of a little chunk of fat on it. I like to leave some of that for the flavor that it does and take it off afterward. I would say to be fair it is probably medium knife work.

B: Yeah, you know how about as our good friend former meat scientist Dr. Phil Bass used to say. “The thing is you can’t eat the bone.” We haven’t evolved where as humans we can eat the bone. Have you guys found any uses for those bones or do people take them home?

V: You know what they do. And that surprises me that you ask. Maybe you have been one those guests who ask to take the bone home or something. But people actually have, its surprising the first few times it happened. You know you have some of those rules, but we will take it back and we’ll flash it in the oven for them to kind of give them as dry a bone as we can and wrap that thing up in in their to-go bag. You know we have been thinking about some ways. What we try to do is very minimal. We actually stuff the cilantro into the bone and you know it’s basically sitting down in some bone marrow. When you pull it out it’s just a little bit but that’s all you need when you deal with that rich bone marrow fat and you can kind of shake that on your tortilla before you make your taco. But the bone is definitely a crowd pleaser and aside from cutting it in half, people taking it home and our little trick of kind of brushing out some of that bone marrow that is inside there is one use you know.

B: That’s beautiful, that’s beautiful. Chef take a minute if you could to tell us a little bit about what folks because you happen to be in an area of the country where let’s face it everybody, everybody gets to Orlando FL because you are not that far from the mouse with the ears. Can you tell us about, you know when people when they come and they do the Disney experience you guys are right there. What can people expect when they come into American Kitchen?

V: Well in our place specifically you know, we do understand that people are coming from all over whether it’s International or people coming from the United States coming for the mouse or the number of other things. They just keep packing stuff on. Even 10 miles down the road 12 miles down the road you have universal and its other attractions. There are constantly people coming in there. It is definitely a blessing to be in that area but one thing we have tried to do Bryan is we actually, I always try to be well rounded as a chef. I know people say Jack of all trades but master of none but I don’t believe that. It’s cooking at the end of the day so what you can expect from American Kitchen is for us to be anything that you are looking for in a restaurant experience. So I say that just getting a nod from one of the local foodie forums. Tasty Charles. Who is well known, easily one of the most well-known foodie forum groups in Central FL who actually nominated us for their Magical Dining Roundup as one of the best steak houses.

B: That’s awesome

V: Yes thank you very much you know we are not a steakhouse you know, but we do carry about 6 cuts of *Certified angus Beef*[®] with now not including the shank whose added in a few items on the regular menu and made its appearance on our magical dining menu. For American Kitchen just expect to be satisfied however you want to go. If you are looking for a more formal dish, or if you are looking for great bar food or snacks or if you are looking for awesome steaks, dry-aged beef things like that. We also constantly have a rotating, what I call the market fish item. It’s not necessarily a daily special it’s a market fish but. We get something in and we run one day two days or sometimes will stay static for a couple weeks but taking advantage of the seafood that’s around us. That I think is the biggest expectations. We understand that there is some great competition not only in the city of Orlando and around but the towns coming up and these chefs and cooks in

restaurants that feel a little chip on their shoulder as being a touristy place and are starting to try and prove themselves and all the way down to the celebrity guys you know, a mile down the road from us in Disney Springs you know.

B: Excellent, excellent well chef that is about all the time that we have. I really appreciate you taking the time to join us on here. For those of you listening if you are gearing up for planning that Disney trip where you throw the kids in the car for 17 hours. Yeah we know the drill please go ahead and see our friend Venoy Rogers. Now that is located in the B Resort is that right?

V; That is correct located inside the B resort we are right outside of Disney Springs. We are technically on Disney property but we are not beyond the gates but we are close by

B: Head on into American Kitchen for a beef shank taco. Chef thank you for taking time to join us on Meat Speak.

V: Its always a pleasure talking with you Bryan

B: Back here on the Meat Speak Podcast powered by the *Certified Angus Beef* brand I'm Bryan Schaaf, Chef Tony Biggs, Meat Scientist Diana Clark back here. It's a day where we are giving shanks. There are so many puns that can be put out there you know when you talk about the beef shank you know it is just happiness. One of the things

D: Instead of Thanksgiving, Shankssgiving is right around the corner right.

B; Leave the bird

D: Drop that in the deep fryer, just a thought.

B: You know the beef shank it is you know when you look at we have to be very careful about some of the things we talk about because sometimes we say this is really cool you guys taste this, but you can only get it if you have a meat scientist in your back pocket. Fortunately we do so we can talk about merlot steaks and lord knows what else can come off, but the fact of the matter is if nobody is making it at the packer level you can't really get it. The beef shank is out there.

D: Yeah definitely we have had many people who have worked with their food distributors and they are able to get it whether it is boardline or an independent but they have had success. Usually you just have to order shank and they are getting a delivery of that hind shank. You can even have them split it too.

B; That's right so ok just to be clear if you order shank you are going to be getting hind shank. I would be curious to see if anyone specked a foreshank, what would show up.

D: I don't I think they would probably look at you like you are nuts.

B: You know if you really want to make your meat company. There is kind of a love/adversarial relationship between most chefs and the person bringing stuff in their back door. If you really want to irk your sales guy the just say I would like a left shank please.

D: Go to the ones that don't purchase or sell it *Certified Angus Beef* and do that

T: Well let's invite Morton Anderson and we'll have him shank right

B: That's right. Chef one last thing and shame, shame, shame on me for not addressing this sooner. When you get the shank you know Venoy talked a little bit about it, we talked about it with some of the bbq guys who love those plate short ribs but there is still no good use of the bone. But when you get the shank you get all the marrow right? If you can take us home, give us your favorite use of bone marrow. Because you are buying this shank in anyway. Man don't waste the marrow.

T: Don't waste the marrow. It is just gold right Diana, We have done everything from caramelize the whole bone and then we put some micro greens on top. That is a great presentation. Serve that with a crusty bread and a little bit of bacon jam.

D: ah yes that looked gorgeous, dip that bread in there

T: It is good enough for 2 – 3 people. It adds flavor to soups, butters. You can do a beautiful beef fat butter with a little bit of truffle oil and it is just amazing and if you don't use it I am going to get Shankenstein after you for Halloween.

(Laughter)

B: As I think about it you know, as I think about I am not a beach guy but if I were to ever lay out on the beach I just want you to baste me in marrow.

T: If I see you on the beach my gosh I am just going to buy some brushes from Walmart and dip them in oil and brush you.

B: Just baste me please.

D: I have a very Kramer image in my head right now.

B: You know Chef Biggs and Meat Scientist Diana Clark thank you for joining us on the podcast today. This is the Meat Speak Podcast. If this is your first time tuning in. You can find us across most major podcasting platforms or simply by visiting CertifiedAngusBeef.com/podcast. You will see the chef and my oversized heads staring back at you.

T: Hey what happened to our cardboard duo of you and I? I saw a lot of pictures with that at conference. I think I saw it in your window looking out into the parking lot. It's perfect.

B: Its surveying the property right now be careful somebody is always watching. So if this is your first time listening. Feel free if you want a specific topic addressed please know you can email us at CertifiedAngusBeef.com. Until next time wait for it. Shanks for listening.